

Message Text

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SUBJ: TOUGH GOVERNMENT STATEMENT FOLLOWING JULY 23 DISTURBANCES

REF ATHENS 5572

1. SUMMARY. IN THE WAKE OF THE JULY 23 VIOLENCE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS REASSERTED ITS DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC ORDER. IT HAS, IN EFFECT, PROHIBITED OUTDOOR DEMONSTRATIONS UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER, AND LAID RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VIOLENCE AT THE DOOR OF THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, FAR LEFTIST GROUPS AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE JUNTA'S MILITARY POLICE. IN RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S CHARGES AGAINST THE LEFT, PASOK LEADER PAPANDREOU ACCUSED PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS OF TRYING TO POLARIZE GREEK POLITICAL LIFE. THE COMMUNISTS (KKE-EXTERIOR) BLAME THE RIGHT AND THE POLICE FOR THE VIOLENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, FOLLOWING THE RIOTING AND VIOLENCE ON JULY 23, WAS A STRONG STATEMENT ON JULY 24 BY
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THE GOVERNMENT, THE EFFECT OF WHICH IS TO PROSCRIBE

ALL OUTDOOR GATHERINGS UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

3. THE GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT WAS ISSUED AFTER A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE, GREECE'S INNER CABINET, AT WHICH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS PRESIDED. THE STATEMENT DESCRIBES THE JULY 23 VIOLENCE "AS GIVING THE IMPRESSION OF ANARCHY". DECLARING THE DETERMINATION OF THE GOVERNMENT "TO USE ALL MEANS TO PROTECT LAW AND ORDER AND TO QUELL ALL ANARCHIC MANIFESTATIONS", IT ASSERTS THAT AVAILABLE EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT ANY OUTDOOR DEMONSTRATIONS, IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE AT LEAST, WILL BE "INFECTED BY EXTREMIST ELEMENTS WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO DISTURB PUBLIC ORDER". FOR THIS AND OTHER REASONS AND SO THAT THE TRIALS WHICH ARE BEGINNING CAN TAKE PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF CALM, THE GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ANNOUNCES, THE GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN ORDER. THE ORGANIZERS AND PARTICIPANTS IN ANY OPEN AIR GATHERING THAT IS HELD WITHOUT POLICE PERMISSION BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF SEPTEMBER WILL BE SUBJECT TO PENAL SANCTIONS, ACCORDING TO THE STATEMENT.

4. (NOTE: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE, OR COUNCIL, AS SOME CALL IT, WAS ANNOUNCED EARLIER THIS WEEK TO COORDINATE AND EXPEDITE GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES. UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE PRIME MINISTER, IT CONSISTS OF THE MINISTERS OF COORDINATION AND PLANNING, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, NATIONAL DEFENSE, FINANCE AND THE MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER. OTHER MINISTERS ATTEND COMMITTEE MEETINGS DEPENDING ON THE SUBJECT. THE MINISTERS OF JUSTICE AND OF PUBLIC ORDER PARTICIPATED IN THE JULY 24 MEETING.)

5. THE STATEMENT ALSO PROVIDES THE GOVERNMENT'S ANALYSIS OF THE GENESIS AND EXECUTION OF THE VIOLENCE OF JULY 23. ACCORDING TO THE GOG, CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND LEFTIST ORGANIZATIONS WHICH SUPPORTED THEM HAVE INITIAL PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY. THE STATEMENT SAYS THAT PARTICIPANTS IN THE "RIOTS", INVLUDED: "ANARCHISTS" FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST MOVEMENT OF GREECE (EKKE-WHICH PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THE APRIL 21 ATTACK ON THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMBASSY), THE ORGANIZATION OF MARXISTS AND LENINISTS OF GREECE (OMLE), AND "TROTSKYITES"; FORMER MEMBERS OF THE JUNTA'S MILITARY POLICE (ESA); AND YOUNG PEOPLE, "WHO JOINED FOR THE FUN".

6. SUPPLEMENTING THIS ACCOUNT WAS A STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC ORDER THAT THE DISTRUBANCES WERE PLANNED IN ADVANCE. HE PROMISED A FULL INVESTIGATION.

7. PASOK LEADER ANDREAS PAPANDREOU QUICKLY RESPONDED TO THE GOVERNMENT DECLARATION. DEFENDING THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, PAPANDREOU ASSERTED THAT THE GOG'S DECLARATION ON THE RIOTS SHOWS THAT BOTH IT AND THE PRIME MINISTER ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE "DICTATORIAL CONSTITUTION". PAPANDREOU ALLEGED THAT CARAMANLIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT ARE RESOLVED TO POLARIZE GREEK POLITICAL LIFE, AND HE CONCLUDED THAT THEY MUST BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUTURE EVENTS.

8. IN CONTRAST TO PAPANDREOU'S BROADSIDE, THE COMMUNIST PARTY (EXTERIOR), SEEMS CONTENT FOR THE PRESENT TO DEFEND THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT'S CHARGES AND TO ATTRIBUTE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VIOLENCE TO RIGHT WING PROVOCATEURS AND THE POLICE.

9. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT IN RECENT WEEKS HAS REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR ITS OPPOSITION TO ACTS OF PUBLIC UNREST AND ITS INTENTION TO MAINTAIN ORDER. ALTHOUGH THE JULY 24 STATEMENT DOES NOT EXPLICITLY PROHIBIT OUTDOOR DEMONSTRATIONS, THE JUXTAPOSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED EXPECTATION THAT ANY DEMONSTRATION WILL LEAD TO VIOLENCE AND ITS DECLARED RESOLVE TO MAINTAIN ORDER CLEARLY INDICATE THAT IT INTENDS, IN FACT, TO ENFORCE JUST SUCH A PROHIBITION, PRESUMABLY BY REFUSING TO GRANT ANY PERMITS FOR OUTDOOR DEMONSTRATIONS UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER, BY WHICH TIME THE VARIOUS TRIALS OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP ARE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED. IN ANY CASE, THIS IS THE INTERPRETATION THAT IS BEING GIVEN WIDELY TO THE STATEMENT HERE BY THE PRESS AND OTHERS. KUBISCH

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